

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LIBREV 01666 171124Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----118950 171130Z /12
P 171000Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1209

S E C R E T LIBREVILLE 1666

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GB, US
SUBJ: BONGO REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER

REF: LIBREVILLE 1660, STATE 154495

1. APPRECIATE PROMPT REPLY, I WILL, HOWEVER, NEED TO BE ABLE TO TELL BONGO MORE ABOUT WHY THERE IS "NO HOPE" THAN REFTEL CONVEYS SHOULD HE RAISE HIS REQUEST DIRECTLY WITH ME. (IN ANY CASE WILL NEED TO BE PREPARED TO GO TO HIM, SINCE BONGO MAY EXPECT THAT INASMUCH AS HE HAD MADE HIS REQUEST TO ME THROUGH MAMBOUKA, ALL HE NEED DO NOW IS SIT BACK AND WAIT FOR REPLY). PROPOSED LETTER WILL BE HELPFUL AND I HOPE CAN BE PROVIDED, BUT IT OF COURSE IS NOT SAME THING AS FACE-TO-FACE CONSULTATION.

2. IF BONGO WILL GIVE US ENOUGH TIME, I CONTINUE PREFER THAT AMB MAMBOUKA SHARE IN CONVEYING NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO BONGO. SHORT DELAY IN ANY CASE WILL GIVE BONGO AT LEAST IMPRESSION THAT MATTER IS UNDER CONSIDERATION. INCIDENTALLY, DEPT, AND PERHAPS WHITE HOUSE, SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR INQUIRY ON BONGO'S BEHALF FROM TEMPLESMAN IF BONGO FOLLOWS PAST HISTORY.

3. GIVEN NATURE OF DEPARTMENTS REPLY, I WOULD LIKE NOW TO RAISE POSSIBILITY OF SHORT VISIT HERE BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG PRIOR TO HIS TRIP TO MIDDLE EAST. DEPT AND YOUNG HIMSELF HAVE INDEPENDENTLY

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RAISED DESIREBILITY OF CONSULTING WITH SENIOR AFRICANS IN STATE 153154, PROCESS WITH WHICH I HEARTILY CONCUR. AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, THERE ARE VARIETY OF REASONS WHY I BELIEVE YOUNG VISIT HERE WOULD BE HELPFUL (LIBREVILLE 1229), AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT BONGO'S REQUEST REINFORCES THOSE ARGUMENTS. MOREOVER, SHORT VISIT COULD BE MANAGED FAIRLY EASILY IN TERMS OF AFRICAN SENSIBILITIES PRIOR TO KHARTOUM SUMMIT, AS PART OF NORMAL CONSULTATION

PROCESS DURING COURSE OF LONGER TRIP. IT WOULD ALSO SERVE TO
GO LONG WAY TO SOOTHING BONGO WHEN WE HAVE TO TELL HIM NO IN ANSWER
TO HIS REQUEST.TIENKEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LIBREV01666
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780253-1185
Format: TEL
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780647/aaaaboxp.tel
Line Count: 65
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8616c486-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 LIBREVILLE 1660, 78 STATE 154495
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2309148
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BONGO REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER
TAGS: PEPR, GB, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8616c486-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014